United Nations E/2011/120

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
27 May 2011

Original: English

Substantive session of 2011
Geneva, 4-29 July 2011
Item 2 (b) of the provisional agenda*
High-level segment: annual ministerial review

Letter dated 25 May 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Malawi to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Economic and Social Council

I have the honour to refer to the 2011 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council and the national voluntary presentations.

Please find herewith a copy of the national report of the Republic of Malawi on progress towards the achievement of the internationally agreed goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, for the annual ministerial review to be held during the high-level segment of the substantive session of the Council for 2011 (see annex).

(*Signed*) Brian G. **Bowler**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* E/2011/100 and Corr.1.

11-35656 (E) 220611

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 25 May 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Malawi to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Economic and Social Council

Report presented to the Economic and Social Council high-level segment annual ministerial review

Implementation of the education section Millennium Development Goals and Education for All goals in Malawi

May 2011

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I. Background on Malawi

Introduction

Socio-economic context

Malawi's total population is estimated at 13.2 million with an annual growth rate of 2.4 per cent. The percentage of the population under 19 years of age is about 56 per cent, as can be seen in table 1 below. This age structure has implications for the education system of the country.

Table 1
Population census distribution by age, sex and percentage, 2008

Age groups	*Male*	*Female*	*Both sexes*	*Total population (Percentage)*
<1	247 809	255 576	503 385	4
1-4	922 138	944 488	1 866 626	14
5-9	972 307	995 992	1 968 299	15
10-14	826 076	844 315	1 670 391	13
15-19	625 664	651 028	1 276 692	10
Total	**3 593 994**	**3 691 399**	**7 285 393**	**56**

Source: Population and housing census, 2008.

Population projections suggest that Malawi will continue to experience a rapid rate of growth in spite of an assumption of declining fertility and mortality not declining significantly. At present, the absolute annual population increase is less than half a million people, but in 2015 it is projected that it will reach half a million. This has implications for the school going population as shown below.

The estimated gross domestic product (GDP) per capita for Malawi is about $344. Despite the low per capita gross national product, preliminary figures indicate that Malawi's real GDP growth was 7.1 per cent in 2010. GDP at current prices has been growing for the past decade. This is more than the 6 per cent that was projected in the country's medium term development strategy (the Malawi growth and development strategy). That growth emanated from good performance in strategic sectors like agriculture, mining, distribution, construction and services. Table 2 below summarizes the performance of selected macroeconomic indicators.

Table 2
Selected country macroeconomic indicators

Category	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2009 December*	*2010 December*
Real sector						Preliminary	Preliminary
Population (million)	12.3	12.8	13.2	13.1	13.5	13.5	13.8
GDP at current market prices	326.2	396.4	465	569.9	664.6	664.6	765
Real GDP growth (per cent)	3.3	6.7	8.6	8.6	7.5	7.5	7.1
GDP per capita (United States dollars)	227.9	239.7	268	312.5	343.6	367.6	369
Consumer price index 2000 = 100	198.5	226.1	244	265.4	292.2	300.9	320
Average annual inflation rate (per cent)	15.4	13.9	8	8.7	8.4	7.6	6.3
External sector							
Exports (free on board)	60.3	73.8	111	117	128.8	—	—
Imports (free on board)	119.1	143.5	154	183	199.5	—	—
Fiscal sector							
Total revenue	**100.2**	**128.4**	**161**	**160.8**	**169.7**	**14.8**	**48.2**
Total expenditure	**99.6**	**131.3**	**169**	**204.1**	**222.8**	**20**	**25.6**

Source: Reserve Bank of Malawi.

Malawi still receives the bulk of its assistance in the form of project aid, which accounted for 65.2 per cent of official development assistance (ODA) in 2008/09. In 2009/10, Malawi received support from its development partners amounting to about 72 billion Malawi kwacha (MK), an increase of MK 13.7 billion from MK 62.6 billion reported in the previous financial year. Out of total project aid disbursed, the education sector received 10.6 per cent, the third highest allocation across the Government. Well-established donors who contribute to this include the African Development Bank (AfDB), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the European Union, the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, German Development Cooperation, the United Nations Children`s Fund (UNICEF), the World Bank, the Canadian International Development Agency, the United States Agency for International Development and Norway.

The Government of Malawi developed the Malawi growth and development strategy as its overarching policy framework for 2006-2011. The Government is currently in the process of developing a successor strategy. The overall objective of the Malawi growth and development strategy is to reduce poverty through sustained economic growth and infrastructure development. The strategy tries to balance wealth creation and social development for Malawi.

II. Education sector

A. Education policies and reforms

The broad policy on education is to develop an "efficient" and high quality system of education of a type and size appropriate both to the available resources and to the political, social and economic aspirations of the nation. The emphasis of education is to equip students with the skills and desire for self-employment and entrepreneurship rather than conventional wage employment.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology is responsible for the provision of primary, secondary and tertiary education. In addition, the Ministry is responsible for the provision of technical and vocational education and adult literacy education. While the Government is the main provider of education at all levels, the private sector is currently active in the provision of pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary education.

Before 1994, the education sector was guided by two successive education development plans. The first plan was formulated for the period 1973-1980 with the following major objectives:

(a) Fulfilment of the specific needs of the labour market;

(b) Development of a school curriculum relevant to the socio-economic and environmental needs of the country;

(c) Improved efficiency in the utilization of existing facilities and resources and a more equitable distribution of educational facilities and resources.

The second education development plan covered the period 1985-1995 and had four overall objectives, which were:

(a) Equalization of educational opportunity;

(b) Promotion of efficiency in the system;

(c) Improvement of physical and human resources;

(d) Judicious use of limited resource.

The third education development plan, the Education Policy and Investment Framework for Education in Malawi (1995-2005), was developed in 1995 to address the challenges faced by the education sector with the introduction of various reforms, including the policy to provide free primary education. The policy was revised between 1997 and 2000 to make it more comprehensive and more focused and analytical in terms of priorities and budgetary planning mechanisms. The revision took into account, in a holistic manner, all the reforms that had taken place at all levels of education. These included:

(a) Introduction of free primary education;

(b) In secondary education, change from a system of distance secondary school education to community day secondary schools;

(c) In tertiary and higher education, revision of the teacher training programme to address the high demand and high attrition rates at the primary and secondary levels, the establishment of the new Mzuzu University and the various

reforms in the administration of the University of Malawi towards making it autonomous.

The mandate of the education sector is to contribute towards social development as articulated in the Malawi growth and development strategy. In 2008, the national education sector plan was launched as the successor to the education development plans. The national education sector plan is a 10-year education plan covering the period 2008-2018. The education sector has defined three thematic areas of intervention during this period, namely:

(a) Expand equitable access to education to enable all to benefit;

(b) Improve the quality and relevance of education to reduce dropout and repetition and promote effective learning;

(c) Improve governance and management of the system to enable more effective and efficient delivery of services.

The national education sector plan clearly articulates the Government's ambitions to improve the education sector. It contains clear and detailed goals, outputs, outcomes, strategies and projected financial requirements to achieve the various targets. A five-year education sector implementation plan (2009-2013) was developed to put the national educational sector plan into operation. The implementation plan serves as a guide for the articulation of the broad development objectives of the national plan. It extracts strategies and activities to be undertaken in the five-year period, which are refined and re-defined into annual workplans and budgets. The implementation plan is an operational tool for all managers and implementers at every level of the education system in Malawi.

The education sector implementation plan presents detailed financing requirements based on the national education sector plan and currently known available resources for the period 2009-2013. These serve to demonstrate that the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, in particular and the education sector as a whole, are severely constrained from achieving their mandate and vision because of the limited resources currently available. The education sector implementation plan also has a detailed monitoring and evaluation plan that presents all key indicators drawn from the Malawi growth and development strategy.

B. Structure of the education system

The formal education system is composed of three levels: primary education, secondary education and post-secondary education as detailed below:

(a) **Primary education**. The official entry age for primary education is six years. It comprises standards one to eight. This is divided into infant level (standards 1 and 2), junior level (standards 3 and 5) and senior level (standards 6 to 8). At the conclusion of the primary cycle, pupils sit for the primary school leaving certificate examination, which also determines their eligibility for entry into secondary school;

(b) **Secondary education**. Secondary education lasts for four years and has two levels: two years for the junior certificate level (forms I and II) and two years for the Malawi school certificate (forms III and IV);

(c) **Post-secondary education**. Post-secondary education varies in length depending on the type of education programme, such as:

(i) **Teacher training**. This previously lasted for two years, but was modified after the introduction of free primary education in 1994 in an effort to train more teachers to meet the demand. The Government plans to go back to the two-year programme, which will combine both residential and distance training;

(ii) Diploma and degree programmes at university, which last between three and five years;

(iii) Apprenticeship courses lasting between two and four years.

C. Overall education sector conditions: education statistics and sector challenges

The school-age population (6 to 17 years of age) represents about 37 per cent of the total population. This proportion is the highest in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region and represents a heavy burden on the education sector. It is estimated that the population growth rate will slowly decrease, but that the primary school-age group (6 to 13 years old) will increase by 20 per cent between 2008 and 2018. If universal primary education is reached before 2018, primary school places for 4.8 million children[1] will be needed in 2018. This represents 45 per cent more primary school places compared with 2008.

Table 3
Total school-age population by school level (mid-year projections by national statistical offices, February 2010)

School level	*Age group*	*Both sex*	*Male*	*Percentage*	*Female*	*Percentage*
Primary	6-13	3 368 420	1 680 078	49.2	1 688 342	50.8
Secondary	14-17	1 175 757	586 497	49.8	589 260	50.1

Source: Education Management Information System, 2010, based on the situation at a primary school in Zomba District.

Table 4
Distribution of teachers by education division and location

Education division	*Rural area*	*Semi-urban*	*Urban*	*Grand total*
Central Eastern	116	7 556	288	7 960
Central Western	2 756	9 340	377	12 473
Northern	849	7 313	233	8 395

[1] Assumes that the repetition rate will remain constant between 2008 and 2018, i.e., that 20 per cent of students would be repeaters.

Education division	*Rural area*	*Semi-urban*	*Urban*	*Grand total*
Shire Highlands	31	5 757	38	5 826
Southern Eastern	619	5 848	397	6 864
Southern Western	2 326	4 134	192	6 652
Grand total	**6 697**	**39 948**	**1 525**	**48 170**

Source: Education Management Information System, 2010.

It is estimated that 85 per cent of the population lives in rural areas. This poses a challenge in terms of relocation of teachers because of the remoteness of some areas.

There is a shortage of primary school teachers in the system as illustrated in table 5. In 2010, ratios of pupils to teachers and pupils to qualified teachers were 80:1 and 91:1 respectively and these have been increasing over the years. This has affected the primary school leaving certificate results over the years, as illustrated in table 5.

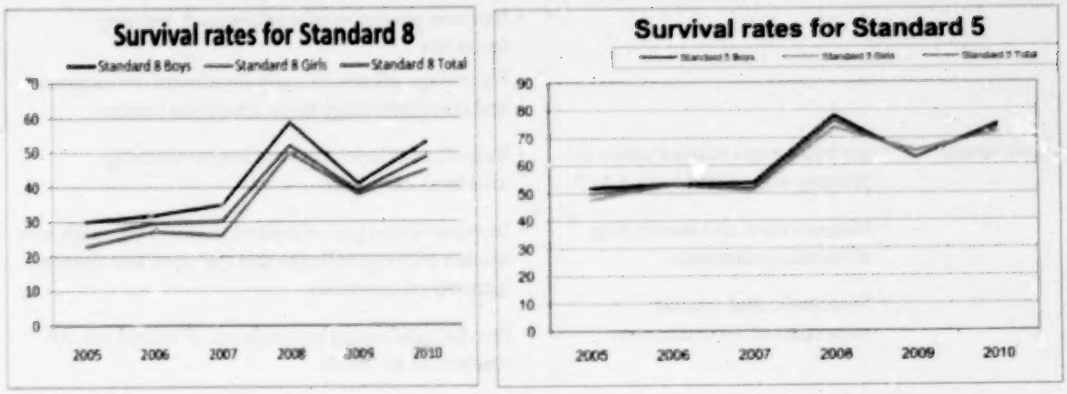
Table 5
Pupil-teacher ratios, pupil-qualified teacher ratios and primary school leaving certificate results

			Primary school leaving certificate results		
Year	*Pupil-teacher ratio*	*Pupil-qualified teacher ratio*	*Boys (percentage pass)*	*Girls (percentage pass)*	*Total (percentage pass)*
2005	71	83	78.5	68.8	74.4
2006	70	84	78.5	68.9	74.4
2007	78	88	75.9	65.9	71.6
2008	78	90	74.9	62.6	69.5
2009	81	92	73.9	61.8	68.6
2010	80	91	—	—	—

Source: Education Management Information System, 2010.

Another challenge facing the education sector is the high dropout rate in both junior and senior levels of primary education as evidenced by high dropout rates and declining survival rates over the years (see figures below).

Figure I
Survival rates for standards 5 and 8



Source: Education Management Information System, 2010.

The HIV pandemic has also dramatically affected the development and performance of the education sector. The adult HIV prevalence rate stood at 12 per cent in 2010 and this has resulted in an increase in the rates of attrition and absenteeism among teachers. HIV has also caused an increase in the number of orphans, estimated to be 7 per cent of children below the age of 17. These children are less likely to go to school than their peers.

Higher education in Malawi is characterized by low enrolment rates, limited infrastructure, high unit costs and internal inefficiencies, as well as inequality regarding access to these institutions. According to the country status report in 2008, enrolment figures are among the lowest in the SADC region, with only 52 students per 100,000 inhabitants, and the unit cost of higher education is 22 times the GDP per capita of Malawi, compared with the average SADC cost of three times GDP per capita.

Table 6
National education sector plan and education sector implementation plan policy reform agenda

National education sector plan/education sector implementation plan goals	*Policy targets*	*Actions*
Equity and access	• Construction and rehabilitation of school infrastructure	• Accelerate construction of classrooms, teachers' houses, girls' hostels and new teacher training colleges
	• Reduced primary gross enrolment rates and increased net enrolment rates (towards 100 per cent)	• Rehabilitate and upgrade infrastructure in older educational institutions
		• Improve retention of girls in standards 6 to 8 and transition of girls into secondary education
	• Gender parity in primary and secondary enrolment	• Roll out "mother groups" in all schools
		• Increase recruitment and training of female teachers

National education sector plan/education sector implementation plan goals	*Policy targets*	*Actions*
		• Increase provision of teaching and learning materials • Encourage growth of early childhood development and complementary basic education centres
Quality and relevance	• Reduced pupil-teacher ratios in primary school standards 1 to 3 • Measurement and monitoring of learning outcomes • Systematic and regular inspection of all institutions	• Recruit additional teachers and/or teaching assistants each year • Increase the output of trained teachers (through new teacher training colleges and the open and distance learning programme) • Provide continuing professional development for teachers at all levels • Introduce double-shifting (and overlapping shifts) in schools with high pupil-teacher ratios and pupil-classroom ratios • Recruit and train more inspectors to increase frequency of inspection visits to schools • Introduce standardized testing to measure and monitor quality of learning and teaching
Governance and management	• Decentralization of management and financing of primary education • Improved efficiency through reduced repetition and dropout rates • Increased role for the private sector and for private financing	• Institutionalize direct support to school (grants paid into schools' own bank accounts) • Increase the participation of local communities and school management committees in primary school management • Strengthen "whole school development" (planning, management, regulations, discipline, etc.) • Develop and implement teacher incentives strategy to improve deployment and reduce attrition • Implement strategy to control repetition in primary schools and increase promotion and completion rates • Improve the coverage of the student loan scheme and recovery of loans after graduation • Encourage public-private partnerships in education and establishment of private institutions

Table 7
Selected national education sector plan and education sector implementation plan indicators (primary and secondary education)

Indicator	Base (2009)		Current status (2010 school calendar)		Indicator target (2013)	
	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary
Repetition rate	17%	—	14%	—	5%	—
Dropout rate	12%	—	10.3%	—	0%	—
Pupil-qualified teacher ratio	92:1	70:1	91:1	—	60:1	—
Net enrolment rate	79%	13%	83%	14%	100%	—
Gross enrolment rate	115	19	115	21	100	—
Survival rate (standard 8)	38%	—	48%	—	100	—
Pupil-textbook ratio	3:1	—	5:1	—	1:1	—
Pupil-classroom ratio	116:1	42:1	101:1	41:1	40:1	40:1
Completion rate	51%	—	—	—	—	—
Percentage of orphans	13%	19%	11%	20%	—	—
Percentage of special needs learners	2%	1%	2%	1%	—	—
Transition rate	na	49%	na	38%	na	50%
Primary school leaving certificate examination pass rate	69%	na	—	na	—	na
Junior certificate of education pass rate	na	62%	na	60%	na	—
Malawi school certificate of education pass rate	na	38%	na	53%	na	60%
Expenditure on secondary education as a percentage of total expenditure on education	na	15%	na	13%	na	—
Public expenditure on primary education as a percentage of total public expenditure on education	51%	na	55%	na	64%	na
Education budget as a percentage of total Government budget	14%		16%		—	

Sources: National education sector plan, education sector implementation plan and Education Management Information System.
A dash (—) indicates not available; na indicates not applicable.

III. Millennium Development Goals in Malawi

A. Institutional framework

Malawi remains highly committed to achieving the eight Millennium Development Goals by 2015. The eight Goals are:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empowerment of women
4. Reduce child mortality

5. Improve maternal health

6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

7. Ensure environmental sustainability

8. Develop a global partnership for development

For the education sector, the focus is on Goals 2 and 3. Implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in Malawi has been done through medium-term strategies such as the Malawi poverty reduction strategy which was implemented from 2000 to 2005. The Malawi growth and development strategy was developed to succeed the Malawi poverty reduction strategy for the period 2006-2011. Currently, the Government is developing the second Malawi growth and development strategy, for the period 2011-2016, which will act as the main tool for accelerating the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The education sector developed its 10-year sector plan, called the national education sector plan, which is aligned to the Goals. All indicator targets in the national education sector plan are drawn from Millennium Development Goal indicators. The education sector implementation plan (2009-2013) acts as a medium-term implementation plan for the national education sector plan over the next five years. An annual programme of work is drawn from the education sector implementation plan and is translated into annual workplans and sector budgets.

B. Progress in education Millennium Development Goals

Achieving universal primary education (Goal 2)

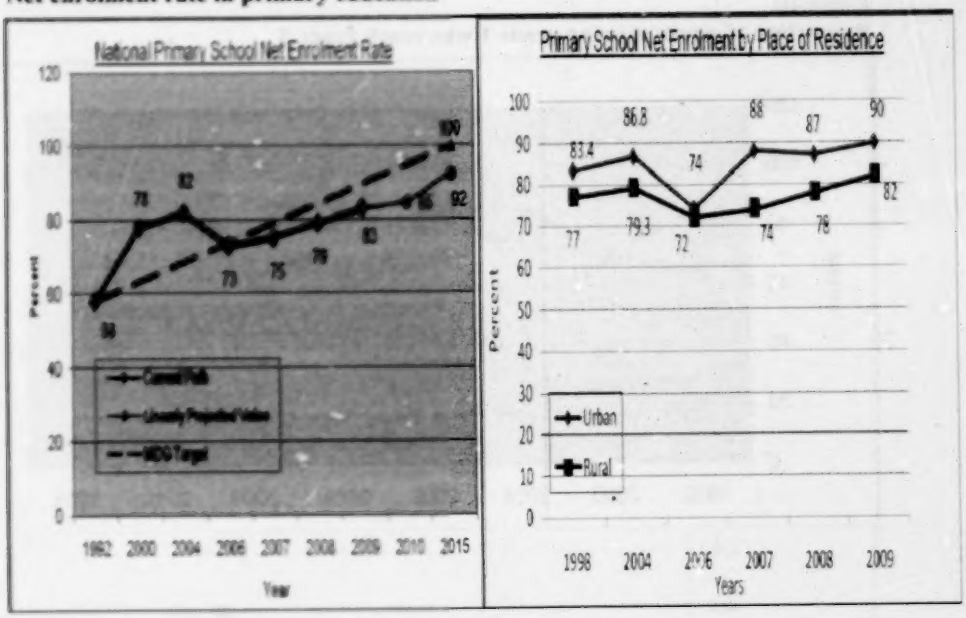
Universal access to basic education and the achievement of primary education by the world's children is one of the most important of the Millennium Development Goals. Education is a vital prerequisite for combating poverty, empowering women and protecting children from hazardous and exploitative labour and sexual exploitation, among other things. It is for this reason that the Government of Malawi has included education as one of the nine priority areas in the national development strategy. The primary focus is to improve access to and quality of education. To this end, the Government has over the years been increasing budgetary allocation towards the education sector. The Government recognizes that human capital development is key in sustaining social and economic development.

Ensuring that by 2015 all boys and girls should be able to complete a full course of primary schooling (target 3)

Indicator 1: Net enrolment rate in primary education

The net enrolment rate in primary education is defined as the extent to which the population of school-going age (6-13 years) is enrolled in schools. This is a percentage calculated by dividing the number of children of school-going age enrolled in schools with the total number of the same age in the population.

Figure II
Net enrolment rate in primary education

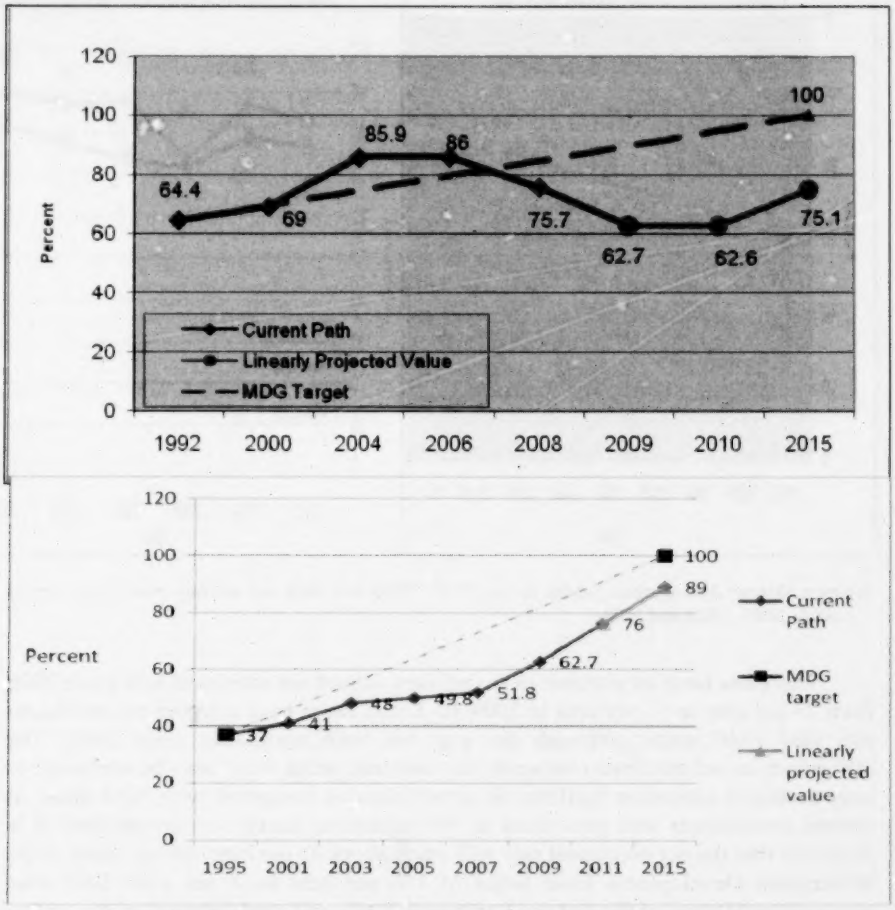


Sources: Malawi demographic health survey 1992, 2000 and 2004 and welfare monitoring survey 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009.

There has been an increase in the primary school net enrolment rate since 2006 from 73 per cent to 83 per cent in 2009/10. Urban areas have a higher net enrolment rate than rural areas, although the gap has been narrowing since 2007. The differences in net enrolment between the rural and urban areas may be attributed to easy access to education facilities in urban areas as compared with rural areas. If current investments and provisions to the education sector are maintained, it is projected that the net enrolment rate will reach about 92 per cent, falling short of the Millennium Development Goal target of 100 per cent by 8 per cent. Following approval by Malawi of the fast track initiative funds and establishment of the sector-wide approach, however, the trend is expected to improve further than the projected 92 per cent.

Indicator 2: Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5

Figure III
Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5



Sources: Malawi demographic health survey 1992, 2000 and 2004, multiple indicator cluster survey 2006 and Education Management Information System 2008 and 2009.

Indicator 2 measures the extent of dropout in primary education. Figure III shows that the proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5 without repeating a grade increased from 69 per cent in 2000 to 86[2] per cent in 2006, then dropped to about 63 per cent in 2009/10. The proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5 is projected to reach about 75 per cent in 2015, which is below the Millennium Development Goal target of 100 per cent. The introduction of various programmes such as school feeding, direct grants to schools, water,

[2] Note that this figure was not accurately calculated beginning in 2001. In 2008, the formula for calculating the indicator changed, which partially explains the decline in the trend. Note that the figure stated presents the recalculated and correct picture.

sanitation and hygiene and child-friendly schools, however, could improve the situation further than the projected 75 per cent.

Promote gender equality and empower women (Goal 3)

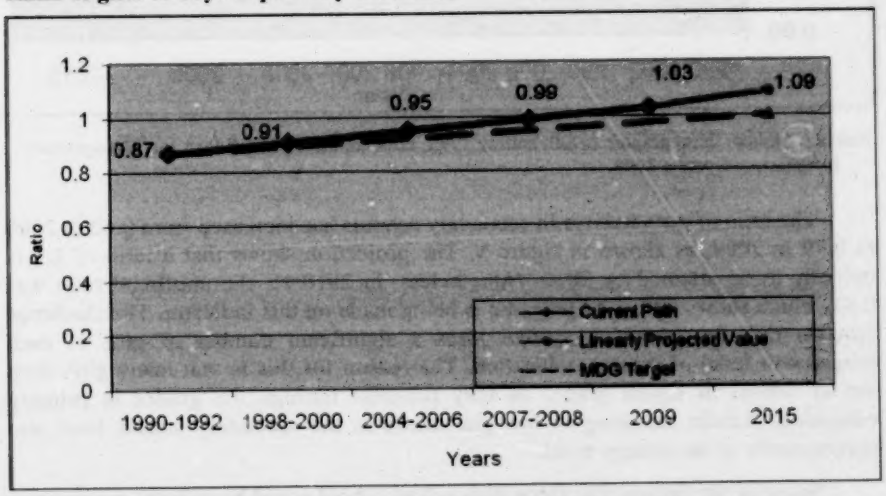
It has been widely accepted that gender inequality exists in Malawi and this status quo affects women more than their male counterparts. The Malawi growth and development strategy recognizes that there is a high correlation between poverty, social vulnerability and gender inequality. This is the reason why even though women constitute 52 per cent of the population in Malawi, they are in most cases marginalized in the social and economic spheres and, therefore, unable to contribute effectively to social, economic and political development.

Strongly related to the above scenario is the high illiteracy level among women (56 per cent as compared with 28 per cent for men). This is fuelled by the high rate of girls dropping out from the formal schooling system, a trend that eventually feeds back into a vicious cycle where once again one will expect to have very few women in formal employment.

Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015 (target 4)

Indicator 1: Ratio of girls to boys in primary education

Figure IV
Ratio of girls to boys in primary education



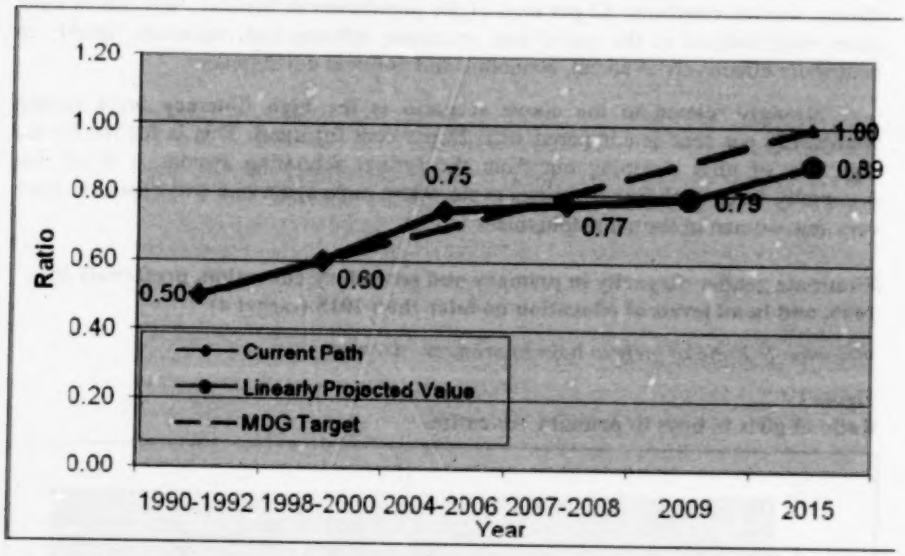
Sources: Malawi demographic health survey 1992, 2000 and 2004 and Education Management Information System 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009.

Figure IV shows that the ratio of girls to boys in primary school has increased from 0.91 in 2000 to 1.03 in 2009/10. This trend shows that the gender disparity gap at the primary school level with respect to enrolment has narrowed considerably. The narrowing of the gender gap in the primary school enrolment rate could be the result of a Government policy shift towards education for girls. With the abolition of school fees and school uniforms as a requirement to attend classes, many

households can afford to send girl children to school. In addition there are more programmes being implemented such as the school feeding programme, water and sanitation, direct grants to schools and child-friendly schools. The figure shows that Malawi has significantly closed the gender gap in primary schools .

Indicator 2: Ratio of girls to boys in secondary education

Figure V
Ratio of girls to boys in secondary education



Sources: Malawi demographic health survey 1992, 2000 and 2004 and Education Management Information System 2008.

The ratio of girls to boys in secondary schools has increased from 0.60 in 2000 to 0.79 in 2009, as shown in figure V. The projection shows that a ratio of 1:1 is unlikely to be attained by 2015. Nonetheless, in 2010/11, the unofficial ratio was 0.81, which shows that good progress is being made on this indicator. The challenge remains that the education system loses a significant number of girls at each progressive level of primary education. The reason for this is that many girls drop out of school or repeat grades as they progress through the grades in primary education, thereby resulting in low girl intake at the secondary school level and consequently at the tertiary level.

Some of the factors that force girls out of school could be cultural practices in Malawi that force girls into early marriages and pregnancies, family responsibilities and other cultural demands. Girls are more likely than boys to assume the role of providing care and support for relatives that are aged or sick. This implies that the elimination of gender disparities remains a challenge at the secondary level. This is also true at the tertiary level. Hence the need to come up with strategies to ensure that the targeted interventions have an impact at all levels of education.

C. Progress on other education outcome indicators

Table 8 below presents some of the selected Millennium Development Goal outcome target achievements for the education sector. These outcomes are the same indicators as for the education sector implementation plan presented in table 7 above. This demonstrates a clear linkage between national planning and sector planning.

Table 8
Achievements in selected Millennium Development Goal outcomes for the education sector

Indicator	*Baseline (2005)*	*2006/07*	*2007/08*	*2008/09*	*2009/10*
Pupil-teacher ratio	85:1	104:1	117:1	81:1	80:1
Pupil-qualified teacher ratio	73:1	62:1	90:1	92:1	91:1
Completion rates in primary schools (percentage)	26.8	69.4	53	51	—
Net enrolment rate (primary education)	82	73	75	79	83
Primary school dropout rate (percentage)	22	—	5	12	—
Primary school pupil-classroom ratio	85:1	104:1	117:1	116:1	101:1
Primary school repetition rate (percentage)	17	18	19	17	—
Secondary school net enrolment rate (percentage)	11	12	13	13	—

Source: Malawi growth and development strategy annual review 2009.
A dash (—) indicates not available.

D. Challenges impeding the attainment of education Millennium Development Goals in Malawi

Despite some notable positive developments in the education sector in Malawi, the sector still faces a number of challenges, which continue to undermine full realization of quality education service delivery and consequently are slowing down attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. Some of the challenges include:

(a) Shortage of qualified primary school teachers (see chap. II above);

(b) Inadequate and disability unfriendly physical infrastructure;

(c) Shortage of teacher housing especially in rural areas;

(d) Shortage of classrooms resulting into high pupil-classroom ratios;

(e) High disease burden due to HIV and AIDS leading to absenteeism especially among girls who take care of the sick;

(f) Poor learning environment which affects girls in primary and secondary schools e.g., sanitary facilities;

(g) Extra burden from domestic chores especially for adolescent girls resulting into high dropout rate;

(h) Lack of female teachers to act as role models.

E. Policy framework and strategies to accelerate attainment of the Millennium Development Goals

Currently, the education sector is implementing the national education sector plan 2008 through the education sector implementation plan 2009; some of the interventions currently being implemented include:

(a) Scaling up training of teachers through different modes in order to reduce the teacher-pupil ratio;

(b) Regular replenishment of textbooks for pupils and roll-out of the primary curriculum assessment reform to all classes;

(c) Annual construction of 1,500 primary schools and 1,000 teachers' houses in 2010/11 through fast track initiative and sector-wide approach resources;

(d) Provision of financial support to girls in selected areas especially at the senior primary level and scaling up school feeding programmes to increase enrolment and retention;

(e) Construction and expansion of girls' boarding facilities in secondary schools and teacher training institutions;

(f) Operationalizing the readmission policy which provides students who withdrew on health grounds a second chance to go back and continue with their education;

(g) Introducing an equitable selection policy at secondary schools and higher education institutions for girls and boys to share 50 per cent of places;

(h) Provision of bursaries to needy students especially girls;

(i) Provision of take home rations to deserving female students in targeted schools.

Table 9
Summary of the education Millennium Development Goal indicator progress in Malawi

Indicator	*2000*	*Current status (2009/10)*	*2015 target*	*2015 projection*	*Feasibility of achieving the goal*
Net enrolment rate in primary schools (percentage)	78	83	100	**92**	**UNLIKELY TO BE MET** (although it is reported that the target will probably not be met, progress on some indicators is very good and it is expected that the projected values could be surpassed moving towards the 2015 targets)
Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 reaching grade 5 (percentage)	69	74	100	**75**	
Literacy rate (15-24 years) (percentage)	68	84	100	**95**	
Ratio of girls to boys in primary education	0.91	1.03	1	**1**	**UNLIKELY TO BE MET** (although the overall goal is unlikely to be met, substantial progress has been made on some indicators, i.e. gender gap at primary school level has been closed)
Ratio of girls to boys in secondary education	0.60	0.79	1	**0.90**	
Ratio of literate women to men (15-24 years old)	0.82	0.94	1	**1**	

IV. Education for all goals in Malawi

A. Institutional framework

Malawi is a signatory to the commitment to achieve the education for all goals. The following are the six target areas:

1. Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education
2. Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality
3. Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes
4. Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults
5. Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to (and achievement in) basic education of good quality
6. Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in Malawi is directly responsible for goals 2, 4, 5 and 6. Goal 3 cuts across different sectors and goal 1 in Malawi is the responsibility of the Ministry of Gender, Child and Community Development. This report, however, presents progress on all the six education for all goals in order to present a holistic picture.

B. Progress towards achievement of education for all goals in Malawi

Table 10
Education for all progress report and further efforts

Education for all goal	*Achievements*	*Efforts/interventions*
Goal 1: Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education	• The Malawi Government launched the early childhood care and development policy in 2003 • There is an orphans and vulnerable children policy and a fully fledged early childhood development unit in the Ministry of Gender, Child and Community Development	

Education for all goal	*Achievements*	*Efforts/interventions*
	• A new syllabus was developed targeting children 0-5 years of age in order to enhance the quality and effectiveness of early childhood development services within Malawi, particularly community-based childcare centres • Data obtained from the Ministry of Gender, Child and Community Development as of 2009 indicated that there were 5,118 community-based childcare centres in the country provided by the Government • Enrolment of learners has almost doubled and this increased the coverage from 1.2 per cent in 1996 to 29 per cent in 2009	
Goal 2: Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities have access to complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality	• Net enrolment rate is at 83 per cent up from 73 per cent in 2006 • Gross enrolment rate is at 115 per cent down from 132 per cent in 2004 • The ratio of orphans to non-orphans attending school had increased from 0.12 orphans in 2003 to about 0.18 in 2009 • Improvement in the standard 5 and 8 survival rates from about 42 per cent and 26 per cent in 2000 to about 74 per cent and 49 per cent in 2010 respectively • Establishment of junior community primary schools to cater for standards 1 to 4	• Introduction of water sanitation in schools to reduce dropout rate especially among girls • Provision of financial support to girls in selected areas especially at senior primary level • Direct grants have been disbursed to all public primary schools under the direct support to schools project
Goal 3: Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes	• Youth literacy rate has increased from 68.1 per cent in 2000 to about 84 per cent in 2009/10. It is projected that by 2015, youth literacy will reach about 95 per cent • Life skills introduced as an examinable subject in all primary schools • Provision of complementary basic education to out of schoolchildren and youth	• Construction of classroom blocks that take cognizance of comfort of special needs children in over 80 schools • Provision of bursaries to needy girls • Provision of take home rations to deserving female students in targeted schools

Education for all goal	*Achievements*	*Efforts/interventions*
		• Implementation of school health and nutrition in 897 primary schools covering approximately 970,000 learners • Operationalization of the readmission policy which provides students who withdrew on health grounds, a second chance to go back and continue with their education
Goal 4: Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults	• 64 per cent of adults (15 years and above) were literate by 2009. The corresponding literacy rates for male adults and female adults were 75 per cent and 54 per cent respectively for the same year (2009) • Successful launch of mass adult literacy campaign in 2010 • The national adult literacy policy was successfully reviewed to reflect the needs of today • Introduction of the Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques (Reflect) methodology • Adult literacy has been well integrated in the national strategy for the education sector • There has been intensive advocacy by civil society organizations for the expanded adult literacy programme in 2010	• Use of Reflect methodology • Relocation of adult literacy programme from the Ministry of Gender, Child and Community Development to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
Goal 5: Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to (and achievement in) basic education of good quality	• Gender gap at primary school level has been closed; the ratio was at 1.03 in 2009 • The ratio of girls to boys in secondary schools has increased from 0.60 in 2000 to 0.79 in 2009. It is projected that the ratio will be 0.90 by 2015. This implies that the elimination of gender disparities remains a challenge at the secondary level • At the tertiary level, the gender parity is also still a challenge	• The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology is implementing interventions that target girls in the form of take home rations (meals) and other interventions such as the school feeding programme. These have helped in retaining girls in school (see chap. III)

Education for all goal	*Achievements*	*Efforts/intervention*
Goal 6: Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills	• Improvements in pass rates at primary and secondary levels, although the trend is not significant • Improvements in literacy rates at all levels • That teaching/learning materials get to the classroom	• Scaled up training of teachers through different modes, construction of new teacher training colleges, re-engagement of at least 2,000 retired trained teachers • Ongoing construction of at least 1,000 teacher housing units particularly in rural schools • Provision of a hardship allowance to rural teachers to motivate them • Curriculum reviews

V. Way forward and recommendations

A. Summary of progress in international commitments (Millennium Development Goals and education for all)

This report has presented a comprehensive picture of how Malawi is faring in respect of the attainment of the internationally agreed commitments. Although there has not been significant progress made towards achieving the education for all goals and the Millennium Development Goals, the Government of Malawi through the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology is relentlessly endeavouring to reverse the current trend and accelerate progress in achieving learning outcomes at all levels, and consequently realizing some of the internationally agreed commitments. This has been boosted by recent improvements in education sector financing as discussed below.

B. Financing the education sector

On 14 January 2010, the Government of Malawi signed a joint financing arrangement with four development partners, namely the World Bank, UNICEF, German Development Cooperation and the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom. The Government signed a memorandum of understanding with all key development partners in the education sector. The active development partners are the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom, German Development Cooperation, the Canadian International Development Agency, the Japan International Cooperation Agency, UNICEF, the World Bank, the World Food Programme (WFP), AfDB and the United States Agency for International Development. The signing of these agreements saw the commencement of the education sector-wide approach. The joint financing arrangement development partners committed themselves to disbursing an agreed

amount of resources in given periods of time to finance the education sector implementation plan, over and above provisions from the Government. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology was also approved to be part of the fast track initiative application in 2010. Some financial commitments made so far starting from the current 2010/11 financial year and projected commitments are set out below:

Department of International Development of the United Kingdom	$90 million	4 years
German Development Cooperation	$25 million	3 years
World Bank	$50 million	5 years
Fast track initiative	$90 million	3 years
Total	**$255 million**	

Table 11
Education sector financing (2009-2011) (exchange rate US$ 1 = MK 155)

	2009/10	***2010/11***	
Education as percentage of total Government of Malawi recurrent expenditures	19.4%	**24.0%**	
	MK bn	***MK bn***	*Change*
Government of Malawi contribution	33.6	**40.4**	+20.1%
On-budget development partner contribution	3.7	**7.8**	+113.1%
Budget voted to education	37.3	**48.2**	
Off-budget development partner contribution	5.2	**6.7**	+27.8%
Overall contribution to education	42.5	**54.9**	+29.1%
Portion provided by Government of Malawi	79.1%	**73.6%**	
Portion provided by development partners	20.9%	**26.4%**	

Table 12
Malawi education sector anticipated financial resource flows from development partners
(Thousands of United States dollars)

	2011-2012		*2012-2013*		*2013-2014*		*2014-2015*	
Development partners	*Project support*	*Pooled funds*	*Project support*	*Pooled funds*	*Project support*	*Pooled funds*	*Project support*	*Pooled funds*
AfDB	3 130	—	5 000	—	4 000	—	2 000	2 000
Canadian International Development Agency	1 000	—	1 000	—	1 000	—	1 000	—
Department for International Development, United Kingdom	3 120	22 400	1 920	22 400	1 920	22 400	1 920	22 400
European Union	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Development partners	2011-2012		2012-2013		2013-2014		2014-2015	
	Project support	*Pooled funds*	*Project support*	*Pooled funds*	*Project support*	*Pooled funds*	*Project support*	*Pooled funds*
German Development Cooperation	3 638	5 780	3 094	5 780	3 094	5 780	3 094	5 780
Japan International Cooperation Agency	5 935	—	96	—	—	—	—	—
UNICEF	6 930	250	6 930	250	6 930	250	6 930	250
United States Agency for International Development	10 000	—	12 000	—	10 000	—	10 000	—
World Bank	—	6 000	—	8 000	—	9 000	—	3 000
WFP	12 373	—	12 373	—	12 373	—	12 373	—
Fast track initiative	—	45 000	—	30 000	—	—	—	—
Total	**46 126**	**64 430**	**42 413**	**66 430**	**39 317**	**37 430**	**37 317**	**33 430**

C. Key reforms being implemented in the education sector

The improvements in education financing have enabled the education sector to scale up implementation of its national education sector plan through the annual programme of work that is drawn from the education sector implementation plan. There are several programmes that are running to accelerate achievement of the education outcome targets as stipulated in the Malawi growth and development strategy and the national education sector plan and education sector implementation plan. Some of the key reforms currently being implemented are:

(a) Construction/rehabilitation/upgrading of education facilities:

(i) Annual construction of teachers' houses (1,000 per year);

(ii) Construction of classrooms (1,500 classrooms per year);

(iii) Upgrading of junior primary schools and community day secondary schools to full conventional secondary schools;

(iv) Rehabilitation of existing teachers' houses (1,000 per year) and classrooms;

(v) Construction/rehabilitation of teacher training colleges (about 5 new colleges will be constructed by 2013);

(b) Direct support to disadvantaged children and grants:

(i) Take home rations;

(ii) Bursaries to needy students;

(iii) Grants to develop and implement school improvement plans;

(c) Provision of relevant textbooks and teaching and learning materials:

(i) Printing and distribution of textbooks to achieve the pupil-textbook ratio of 1:1 by providing textbooks to primary schools that have not yet received their allotments or where textbooks need to be replaced;

(ii) Development and implementation of communication strategies to ensure schools and parents are knowledgeable about the new textbook strategy;

(iii) Provision of pedagogic aids, including textbooks, libraries, computers and audio/visual aids for complementary basic education, special needs education, teacher development centres and technical training colleges;

(d) Development and implementation of an innovative open and distance learning programme: recruitment and ongoing training of 12,000 rural-based teachers by 2013 (currently 10,000 are undergoing training);

(e) Improvement of the teacher management reform:

(i) An assessment and detailed action plan for teacher recruitment, training, deployment, inspection and career progression (implement double shift in primary schools);

(ii) Implementation of activities;

(iii) Development of an integrated human resources management information system;

(f) Capacity-building at all levels of Government to help the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology to design and implement national education sector plan/education sector implementation plan reforms.

D. Roles of other stakeholders in education development in Malawi

Apart from the multilateral and bilateral agreements (development partners) and other governmental agencies, there are other key stakeholders that continue to play a critical role in accelerating the achievements on education outcomes in Malawi.

1. Private sector

The private sector in Malawi is actively involved in education development in a number of ways:

(a) Provision of education services through establishment of educational institutions;

(b) Financing various educational development projects (construction of classrooms, teachers' houses, supply of teaching and learning materials, equipment and furniture, etc.);

(c) Grants/gifts to outstanding students to encourage academic excellence.

2. Local and international non-governmental organizations

Non-governmental organizations in Malawi are also active in the education development through:

(a) Direct financial injections to the sector;

(b) Advocacy;

(c) Infrastructure development.

3. Civil society organizations

There are many civil society organizations that support the programmes for education. Most of them are involved in:

(a) Assisting the Government in enforcing its rules and regulations;

(b) Providing skill-based training to schools and communities;

(c) Supporting community mobilization and advocacy campaigns;

(d) Providing technical and financial support in school management and governance issues;

(e) Facilitating the provision of teaching and learning materials in the rural and remote areas;

(f) Advocating on gender, HIV, finance, infrastructure, school feeding and many other programmes;

(g) Supporting infrastructure development and provision of school furniture and equipment;

(h) Offering school grants or cash transfers to provide education opportunities to children with poor access to education;

(i) Monitoring delivery of education services;

(j) Lobbying for education financing.

4. Faith-based organizations

Religious organizations pioneered the provision of formal education in Malawi and their roles are:

(a) Providing educational services;

(b) Promoting moral education in schools through subjects such as religious education;

(c) Supporting the Government in the provision of education infrastructure;

(d) Supporting the Government in the provision of supplementary reading materials;

(e) Ensuring adherence to memorandums of understanding signed with the Government;

(f) Supporting the Government in mobilizing communities and parents in supporting education service delivery.

5. Communities and parent teacher association

Parents and communities play a critical role in the implementation of education services. Their roles include:

(a) Providing basic necessities to children to enable them to attend school every day;

(b) Encouraging children to go to school at the right age (six years old);

(c) Participating in school projects and programmes, e.g., construction;

(d) Protecting school property and land from being poached;

(e) Ensuring that schools have clean water and children have access to good sanitation facilities;

(f) Participating in the formation of school committees and monitoring their activities at the school;

(g) Assisting children with schoolwork and monitoring their learning progress;

(h) Ensuring that children have adequate time to do school activities at home.

E. Conclusions and recommendations

Although the situation seems to suggest that Malawi is unlikely to meet the education Millennium Development Goals and education for all goals, the Government, in collaboration with its partners, is implementing various reforms and strategies. These are aimed at accelerating the achievement of the education outcomes at all levels and consequently meeting some of the internationally agreed commitments and targets.

For the Government to fully realize its education outcomes and possibly achieve the 2015 Millennium Development Goals and the education for all goals, however, there is a need for enhanced coordination among all stakeholders, including cooperation and development partners. In summary, the following are some of the recommendations that can further enhance education sector performance:

(a) Strong and genuine partnership between government agencies and between the Government and partners;

(b) Significant private sector participation in provision of education;

(c) Mutual accountability for results between the Government and partners.

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